12/30/68

Dear Steve,

Many thanks for the promptness of your Christmas-day letter and the helpful enclosures.

If I had not earlier made my purposes clear, they are protective, not "raising a hue and cry", so that we can be prepared for any eventuality that may arise, especially during the trial, to the degree possible.

I am aware of your firm conviction Hepburn was for real, as recently as my October-November trip out there. Your facing the reality is good, a measure of intellectuality honesty. For whatever consolation you may derive from it, yours was far from the costly error, far from the poorest judgment. The major responsibility is that of those with more experience. At least, this is my opinion.

I am concerned for Steve Jaffe, who is kidding himself while trying to (without success) kid others. He'll magnify his error this way and eliminate the willingness of others to understand he is young and without experience. When we consider the errors of the generation ahead of you, those of my generation, you look better. But if Steve keeps trying to pretend he wasn't fooled and didn't do a lot of harm by it, makes on he eliminated the damage when he did no such thing, he'll not survive it. I hope he can honestly face this matter and do what is still possible to minimize its effects. I have written him and asked him to do as you did.

You are right to limit this as you do. By all means, send a copy of everything to Louis, as I do. I suggest that, with her permission, you should include or at least touch base with Maggie, who is much more mature, has had much more experience, and is another and an excellent mind, something it is always worthwhile consulting. I will include a carbon of this in the event you want to give it to her.

First, I'd like you to consider that it is possible making a complete record is more than "for the record and for any future actions involving the film". If you believe, as I do, that whoever went to this enormous expenditure of time and trouble did so for a purpose, his eye was not on the distant future. Possibly we may not anticipate all his purposes. Is it not prudent, however, to go on the assumption his purposes are serious and more immediate? Could not the trial be one? If so, then every tiny detail of everyone, every thing and place, every event, is a minimum essential. Someone to whom Maggie was introduced socially may be a missing clue, a connecting link. It is by such means that I have, to my satisfaction and I think to Louis', established Lamarre's connection with others who have not done us good, if I may understate. So, I ask for more details for your Hepburn rather than the movie mess (although anything you can add to that will help me, for I've not seen it and do not expect to).

Take the incident of the letter to you via MJ for Turner. That's story-book stuff, what would not normally be done even by paranoids. Did Turner ever tell you its contents? From whom? Why to him? I think you should know that it is not because of the high regard in which Lamarre holds him or Hamparts, for he spoke to me of this. How did they know of MJ's relationship? How was Steve selected? That should have made everyone suspicious. This actually all began before the March date you give, for I heard about and distrusted it when I was there before then, and I left LA 2/10/68. Put a little separate notebook in your pocket and whenever you think of anything, make enough of a record to bring whatever it is back when you have time to type.

[illegible] did Steve meet "Phillippe"? In a room, a suite, a hallway? Have you recalled the last name? There was once a time when I knew a

French press corps, a likely place for intelligence covers.

We may get in the position where knowing the basis of their animus against Hunt might be beneficial. Please contribute anything you can on this. And by the way, whenever you hear again of an elaborate an organization for a conspiracy, particularly an assassination, please have doubts. Or if you hear of even a "paymaster"! Other things also should have flagged the improbability of Hunt being so involved. Likewise, the obviousness of the bait he presented to those of more progressive persuasion.

What, if anything, unusual do you recall of Sorequere's office and the young men? What kind of office was it? Any indication of the business there transacted? Private building, etc? Any signs? What is the relationship between him and Lemarre, if you know or can estimate? Why did Lemarre need a contact, except for they~~xxxxxxx~~ yokels. Did you go anywhere with any of them? You told me the end of October what you ~~xxxxx~~ saw persuaded you. Can you now explain this? Was it only a plush office and polite people?

I think this gives you an idea of what more I'd like to have if you can provide it. Did any of them say anything about anyone else, esp. in the US? Most of all, of anyone in New Orleans? Any writers in the field, like Palmer? Did they know of Boxley? Anything about Turner? Find out from Ray, please, who involved him and how? Was it Steve, which is understandable? I want to know if they had anyone else working for them. Their plan, as of the time they left New Orleans for New York, then Canada, was not to try for any showings that week, beginning 18/9, but to try and arrange for publicity that would tend to attract an audience for the following week. Were there any but the one you were invited to? Were there any strangers at that one? Can you remember the names of the others, or get them? Especially those unknown to you.

You have hearsay on a separate page. Good. Please give me all the hearsay you can, especially if you so label it.

What was the gift that so touched Steve? I doubt he ever doubted Lemarre. I do not believe the CIA tried to get Steve drunk (and failed), or the business of the Swiss hotel room, not, at least, as it was given to you.

I believe, as I have from the first, that this is an intelligence operation, I see nothing in it for the French. I do for the CIA. On the basis of what you know, or what you think possible on this basis, do you believe this is a possibility? If you do, please explain as much as you can, and if you do not, the same.

You have a personal disagreement with Jeffe. Nonetheless, I ask you to get hold of him, tell him you have recorded everything you know (without telling him anything about what you have recorded) and sent it to Louis and me. Try and make him understand it is vital for what he believes in as it is for him and his future that he does this as completely as possible and as fast. Ask him to give you a copy so you can go over it after he has sent him to Louis and me. You may recall something on the basis of what he says. You will also have an opinion of his forthrightness. Encourage him to skip the crap he usually dished out to Jim, to stick to fact and leave out the "exceedingly importants", for he propagandizes himself in his writing. If this thing surfaces at the trial, as it might in a motion for a mistrial, and there is anything we might know and do not, he will be a very sick and a very villainous young man with more to live down than most ever can. As it is, if he had done nothing but waste the relative vast amount of time and money, he would still have been a major disaster.

Sincerely,

My file doesn't take legal size paper. Can you do me a favor by using letter size please? Thanks. Hope you have a good year.